

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of the Riverside City Council Meeting

Held on Thursday, November 10, 2022

Riverside, OH

CALL TO ORDER: Deputy Mayor Denning called the Riverside, Ohio City Council Work Session to order at 6:01 pm at the Riverside Administrative Offices located at 5200 Springfield Street, Suite 100, Riverside, Ohio, 45431.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Councilman Zach Joseph led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Council attendance was as follows: Mr. Denning, present; Mrs. Franklin, present; Ms. Fry, present; Mr. Joseph, present; Ms. Lommatzsch, absent; Mr. Maxfield, present; and Mayor Williams, absent.

Staff present was as follows: Josh Rauch, City Manager; Chris Lohr, Assistant City Manager; Tom Garrett, Finance Director; Kathy Bartlett, Public Services Director; and Katie Lewallen, Clerk of Council.

EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS: Mr. Joseph moved, seconded by Mrs. Franklin, to excuse Mayor Williams. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA: No changes were made to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Ms. Lommatzsch moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to approve the agenda as presented. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

WORK SESSION ITEMS:

I. Crosswalk Design Standard, Choice One – Mr. Craig Eley presented standard drawings for mid-block pedestrian crossings for crosswalks in Riverside. He indicated that each of the three main ones shown were a little bit different, and their goal was to try and standardize the city on a certain number of treatments. He introduced Mr. Alan Heitbrink, who will review how they came up with the standard drawings and how they can be implemented. Mr. Heitbrink handed packets to each of the councilmembers and city manager. The first standard was RRFB, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon, where a pedestrian would press a button and LEDs would flash. He stated that the passive mid-block crossing just had signage with reflectors. A two-lane pedestrian crossing had the RRFB. As the roadways moved to four-lane crossing and a four lane crossing with median where the RRFB was up on a mast arm. The four scenarios are consistent with what Riverside would use. He added on four lanes they can have the RRFB on the mast arm as well as one on the side. The pedestrian will still need to look both ways and yield to traffic, but the light alerts the motorists that someone there is crossing. Mr. Eley added on the signal portion in their notes it is an option for them to look at the pedestrian hybrid beacon; if they get that far with it, they go to hot manual uniform traffic control devices and it will give the full guidance in there on that. This does require a warrant study and there would have to be a certain amount of pedestrian traffic for that. This is not very common.

Mrs. Franklin stated in some cities with more walkability they just have signs where the beacon goes around the sign. She asked if it was not overkill to have it on the bar that goes across the road. Mr. Eley stated if they go back to the passive on top it is similar, but the sign

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would just have the rotating lights around it. That is a little different than the pedestrian active button. Discussion was held on the lighting. Deputy Mayor Denning stated that the combination of the two makes the most sense to him as they push the button, and the lights light up around the sign rather than the big bright strobing light. If the light goes all the time, then people get used to it and don't pay attention. It makes more sense to have a push button activated and lights go around. Mr. Eley stated that standard is the flashing strobe, but it is also allowed to have the LEDs around the traffic sign; they can modify the standard drawing to show either or. Mr. Maxfield asked if the standard is the wig-wag lights. Mr. Eley replied the standard is referred to as the RRFB. Mrs. Franklin stated that in Cleveland she sees the yellow lights, but not the white strobing lights. She stated more cities are adding walkability and it doesn't seem like the white strobing light is the norm as the yellow means caution. Mr. Eley stated he believes they are yellow strobing lights.

Ms. Fry asked what drives these design decisions and what are they trying to accomplish with their land use plan and how does that drive the decisions they make. She wants to bring that together. Mr. Rauch stated that is legitimate; this conversation came about partially because of those reasons and how to encourage development and looking at the corridors. They want to be sure when there is need for a crosswalk, they don't have six or seven versions. Discussion was held on different areas of the city and the crosswalk that would be needed. Mr. Rauch stated staff can discuss and build on the conversation and make some adjustments to get it back to council. Mrs. Franklin asked if they could get actual pictures of what they are talking about so they can see it in action. It will give them a better understanding. Mr. Rauch stated they will bring this back to council in January or February. Ms. Fry asked when it gets brought back could it include details for the safety reasons or walkability reasons. Mr. Rauch stated they could do that. There could be a variety of rationales for why things are the way they are. If council has specific questions, they can get council connected and provide a breakdown. Mrs. Franklin asked if they could also get a PowerPoint rather than paper copies that would be great. Mr. Eley stated there is a multimodal guide put out by ODOT and during the planning and study stages of a project it has things in there they look at with a decision matrix. What they are presenting is something the city would have as a standard. They would use this in construction and the multimodal would be used ahead of this. Ms. Fry asked what it means to do it for construction. Mr. Eley replied that they would do it during the planning stages while designing it. It would be run through this matrix and make all the decisions coming down to the best treatment that would then be brought to council. Discussion continued on what the standard is and what the design is and how each are applied. Deputy Mayor Denning asked if they could possibly get video of these crosswalk designs in action as that shows more than the drawings. Mr. Maxfield asked if these standards are based off the State of Ohio. Mr. Eley stated they will share the matrix with them as well. Mr. Rauch stated he appreciated the conversation, and this is a preview of what they want to do across a variety of infrastructure they will talk about over the next couple of years.

II. Curb Assessment Policy Update – Mr. Rauch stated they have a policy that has been in place for a few years and is prescriptive in terms of how to assess back for curb and gutter. However, they have noticed that with many grants through the state, penalize them as an applicant if they assess for curb and gutter. This means they would not get any grant

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funding for a particular project, get less funding, or have to use more loans in order to get a project through. This sparked the conversation several months ago on how they can address the policy to account for that. He presented two revisions he made to the policy. He removed sections to an old city code that is no longer on the books regarding frontages, so he pulled those out. The substantive change is at the end where they added a blanket statement that effectively says they can adapt, waive, or adjust the policy, as needed, if a state grant would penalize them for assessing. This will help them to get the most amount of grant money possible for a project. If the state or whoever is funding doesn't have an opinion on whether the city assesses or not and there is no penalty, then they will continue to assess as per the policy. It is a quick and clean way to address the language without rewriting the policy. Mrs. Franklin stated when they look at curb assessments most streets that would be paved would not fall under a grant, anyway. He plans to finalize this and bring to them in December or January.

III. Stormwater Utility Ordinance & Calendar - Mr. Rauch stated after their last conversation he made some revisions to the ordinance. It includes references to adopting the stormwater utility fee rate by resolution, having multiple billing tiers, and clarified assessing the rail rights-of-way and bike paths (which he intends to leave out). There was another round of staff comments and legal review. He did some streamlining for readability and having legal review it currently. He plans to bring the ordinance forward in December unless council has an objection. No one objected. He reviewed the next steps once the ordinance passes. The ordinance requires a rate to be set by resolution. The ordinance gives the city the ability to start the assessment process and requires them to have a master plan. By March 2023, they will have finalized calculations on all of the parcels and the impervious surface along with what they expect costs will be. He will give them a firm idea on what the rate is. Between April and May 2023, they will finalize the strategy on how to communicate this to the public: what is stormwater, what is a stormwater utility fee, what are the additional services that are provided. Ms. Bartlett has begun this already. By May, he expects them to commit to a collection strategy. They could buy the utility billing module through the SSI finance software. Given some of the changes that are likely to occur next year, they may or may not be at a place where trying to implement that utility billing on top of everything else may be a tall order. He would prefer to do that, but he will do more homework on a third party to do billing for them as it may save them time and still be accurate. He will have an answer by May 2023. By June, they should have a rule book as required by the ordinance. This includes the design standards, forms used for people to appeal rates, and a companion administrative manual. In August, if they decide to use a third-party he will present a contract to council. If they decide to do everything in-house, they will have everything ordered and ready to roll. By fourth quarter, he will be able to put numbers into the budget for 2024 and be able to say how much is needed from the general fund for public service in conjunction with the stormwater utility fee. The funds not allocated can then be used elsewhere. In November 2023, he will finalize the billing for each parcel. Then, in December, he will ask them to adopt the rate by resolution. This will allow him to put it into the budget formally, and they would start collections in 2024. This is the roadmap to get them there with the ordinance being the easy part and framework for the stormwater utility fee. He is confident they can follow this calendar and implement it. Ms. Fry asked for this information to be shared with them. He will put it in the next packet.

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IV. Health Insurance – Mr. Lohr stated they have been accepted into the Ohio Benefits Cooperative, a non-profit organization composed of local governments. They have been accepted as a voting member with some other local municipalities already in membership (Beavercreek, Centerville, Clayton, Englewood, Miamisburg, Springfield and Washington Township). One of the benefits of the OBC is consistent year over year renewals for health insurance. The five year average is around 5.85% annually. They are looking around 8% for the city's renewals alone. They have done that but have had to switch insurance companies twice in five years. This is challenging from an administrative standpoint and for employees. The OBC has consistently been with Anthem. To join, they need a resolution, which he will bring in December. There is also a three year commitment. For the plans next year, they will be able to keep an equivalent plan for employees with both PPO and High Deductible Health Plan options. They will see some reduced costs. They will also be able to start back with an HAS, currently, they are with an HRA, but there is an issue administratively having to reconcile the HRA accounts. They will also have a good wellness plan that offers some financial incentives. Employees and their spouses will receive \$105 worth of incentive payments for doing healthy activities each quarter. Mr. Joseph asked how it is administered. Mr. Lohr replied it is administered through them and not the city. They will not pay anything extra for it as it is part of the premiums. Mr. Joseph asked when they offload the HRA will they plan to fund the HSA with that money or how will they close out the accounts. Mr. Garrett replied that it goes back to the General Fund, then it will be part of the new budget. Mr. Joseph asked if the city contributes that money or if the employee does. Mr. Rauch replied that the city contributes it. Mr. Lohr stated that employees are not able to contribute to their HRA. Mr. Rauch stated they are on a calendar year benefits plan and if employees don't use the HRA they will lose it. Instead of the city making another contribution to the HRA, they will make the same contribution to the HSA. They will no longer have the administrative burden to account for that, which works out to be a big savings to the city.

Mr. Lohr presented a chart showing the renewal budget impact comparing the current plan and the plan for 2023. The plans are very close and the new plan in some ways are a bit better than what they have been able to offer. If they assume everyone takes the same plan next year as they have this year, both PPO and HDHP, the overall savings will be \$73,313.12 in cost to the city. Mr. Rauch stated that although the deductibles may seem higher, the out of pocket expense for employees is lower for the new plans. Ms. Lommatzsch asked if this has been discussed with the unions. Mr. Lohr stated they spoke with them last week and they have addressed all concerns. Mr. Rauch stated a lot of positives come out of this and the consistency will be better overall.

Mr. Lohr reviewed open enrollment and will have some information sessions next week to review the benefits and changes with employees. In December, council will be asked to approve a resolution that also adopts the OBC By-Laws.

V. Holidays – Mr. Rauch stated that they have to change the personnel policy manual with the updating of the insurance. One recommendation he will also make is their holidays. With the difficulties recruiting and inflationary pressure across the board, and what he has heard how other cities are competing for employees and retain employees, one way is to

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look at holiday schedules. Huber Heights is up to 15 paid holidays and personal days. He presented a list of communities that Riverside tends to compete with for employees in close proximity. Riverside is at the bottom of the list with respect to holiday pay. He suggested giving employees MLK Jr. Day, which will move them up to 14 paid days and put them mid-range with competitors and peers. It is a benefit to employees that also does not directly hit the budget. Ms. Lommatzsch asked how much that will cost the city. Mr. Rauch stated there is no net cost to the city. They would pay the employee to show up or pay them holiday pay. Ms. Fry asked if it would increase overtime. Mr. Rauch replied it is for the administrative staff, so no. Discussion was held on administrative staff who are paid hourly. Mr. Maxfield stated he would also like them to look at Juneteenth as it is a federally recognized holiday. Most surrounding cities are adding that. Deputy Mayor Denning agreed. This is in addition to MLK Jr. Day. Mr. Rauch stated he would make those changes and get that to them in a December meeting.

CITY MANAGER UPDATES: Mr. Rauch stated there will be some information going out to residents regarding Woodman Phase I corridor area with respect to getting public feedback. They will make social media posts as well to allow them to weight in. He stated the 2023 budget includes a pilot lease program for police cruisers and replacement admin cars. There is a master lease, which is what council will approve, that way they do not have to approve every time a car comes in or out. Legal has looked at it and there are no objections there. There is a companion agreement, which costs \$3,000/year, and Enterprise acts as a fleet manager for the city. They will track the gas usage, when maintenance is due on vehicles, and monitor data on vehicles. He will be able to show them how many gallons of gas are used by department. He did research a classification and compensation study that touches on the broader inflationary environment. He received a favorable quote under the \$25,000 threshold. He is likely to pursue that should turnover occur or other things, he needs to know what the market expects they will pay and make decisions from there. He added they will have an item on the agenda to cancel the work session on December 8, 2022, as there is not much to discuss before January. Finally, he stated that a number of complaints came in about utility work going on in the Valleyview area. AT&T and a couple of other companies are all trying to do last mile fiber runs. As a practice, most utility companies hire private contractors to do the work. Most of the time the work occurs in a utility easement and the city has not involvement in that. They are aware of the complaints and he asked staff to track who they are hearing from as they will reach out to partner organizations next week and let them know some residents are not satisfied with the quality of some work being done. Mr. Joseph stated the number to complain to AT&T is 1.800.924.9420, option 2. He added AT&T has destroyed his fence three times.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS: Mrs. Franklin stated they have a lot of contractors working in the city right now. Residents need to be aware of the roads posted with no parking signs. If residents leave their cars in a no parking area, then it makes it hard for the contractors to perform the work. She asked residents to park elsewhere so the workers can get it done quicker.

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Mr. Joseph wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and happy black Friday shopping. He wished everyone to enjoy time with their family. He stated he was thankful for staff and for council.


Ms. Lommatzsch stated that Hometown Holiday is this Saturday at Airway Shopping Center. She will look for them all at this fun event. Santa Claus will come in on a fire truck. The event is from 3:00 – 7:00 pm. She stated on the matter of streets, RVs and boats cannot be parked on the street and must be parked on an impervious surface and not the grass. She stated it is getting abused. Also, trash cans cannot be sitting out in front of the garage; they need to be to the back or side of the home. She added that it is going to snow next week. When the city needs to use plows, cars need to be off the road. Employees are trying to do the best job they can, so residents are safe. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Deputy Mayor Denning restated that Hometown Holiday is this Saturday from 3:00 – 7:00 pm with Santa Claus arriving at 3:00 pm on the fire truck and a motorcycle escort. It will be a wonderful day. Kids can get pictures with Santa in the shop next to the Spirit Halloween store. The Christmas tree lighting is at 6:00 pm. He thanked the service staff because if it does snow, they will be busy. He appreciates all the service department does for them.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Joseph moved, seconded by Mr. Maxfield, to adjourn. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.



Peter J. Williams, Mayor



Clerk of Council